IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-28. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently amended) A method for extracorporeal depletion[[,]] or removal of tumor necrosis factor receptor (TNFR) from blood or blood fractions comprising the following steps:
    a) Optional separation of the blood into one or more blood fractions with solid or liquid components;
    b) Binding of the blood or the blood fractions expressing a TNFR to a surface or particle coupled to a polypeptide wherein the polypeptide comprises at least three components A and at least two components B, wherein each component A comprises a tumor necrosis factor (TNF) monomer or a functional fragment or a functional variant thereof, and each component B is a peptide linker, under conditions allowing binding of TNFR in the blood or the blood fractions to the surface or the particle; and
    c) Separating the bound TNFR from the blood or the blood fractions, thereby depleting or removing TNFR from the blood or the blood fractions.

29. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein before step a) or b) blood is taken from a patient.

30. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein after a step b) or c), the blood or blood fraction is injected or reinjected into a patient.

31. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein components A are identical or different.

32. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein the blood or the blood fraction is from the same organism or different organisms.

33 . (Cancel)

34. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein components B each link together two of the at least three components A.

35. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein at least one of components B has the amino acid sequence $(GGGS)_3$ or $(GGGS)_4$.

36. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein components A and components B form a trimeric protein structure.

37. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 36, wherein components A and components B form a homotrimeric protein structure.

38. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 36, wherein components A and components B form a heterotrimeric protein structure.

39. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein components B are identical or different.

40. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein components B are from the same organism or different organisms.

41. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein the polypeptide has an N-terminal tag sequence.

42. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein the polypeptide has an N-terminal leader peptide sequence.

43. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 28, wherein the polypeptide further comprises component C, wherein component C comprises an antibody fragment or a different protein or peptide, which selectively recognizes a specific target molecule on a cell surface.

44. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 43, wherein component C is an antibody fragment from a mammal.

45. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 43, wherein the antibody fragment comprises scFv.

46. (Withdrawn) Method according to claim 43, wherein component C is a protein or peptide with specificity for a cell surface molecule, particularly a cytokine receptor, a growth factor receptor, an integrin, or cell adhesion molecule.

47. (Withdrawn) Method according to claim 46, wherein the cytokine receptor is selected from the group of the TNFR gene family.

48. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 41, wherein the N-terminal tag sequence is a His tag sequence or a Flag tag sequence.

49. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 44, wherein the mammal is human.

50. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 44, wherein the antibody fragment ~~or antibody derivative~~ is a humanized ~~antibody or~~ antibody fragment.